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SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

NOAA Fisheries Southwest Fisheries Science Center &
San Diego Natural History Museum
MEDIA RELEASE
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Working on Thin Ice: 25 Years of Research in Antarctica
Opens at the San Diego Natural History Museum on May 14, 2011

May 12, 2011; San Diego—A brand-new exhibition celebrating 25 years of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) research in the most extreme of continents opens at the San Diego Natural History Museum. Photographs spanning the history of the U.S. Antarctic Marine Living Resources (U.S. AMLR) Program's—of scientists at work, the critters they study and the gear they've used—will be on display along with retired research gear, actual Antarctic specimens, and survival suits. *Working on Thin Ice: 25 Years of Research in Antarctica* runs from **May 14, 2011 through April 15, 2012**, and is included with Museum admission.

“Working on Thin Ice: 25 Years of Research in Antarctic is a glimpse into the life and work of the dedicated NOAA scientists who travel to this formidable place year after year in order to understand how the Antarctic ecosystem works and how human activity affects its denizens,” says Dr. George Watters, director of research for the U.S. AMLR Program, located in La Jolla, California. Historic images, interactive science, survival suits to try on, and Antarctic research gear encourage visitors to understand Antarctica and why its health matters to them.

The photographs in the exhibition were taken and donated by Antarctic scientists and can be found in a new photographic collection of over one thousand photos (<http://swfsc.noaa.gov/ImageGallery>). Some date back to 1909, though the majority is from the 25 years of U.S. AMLR Program field work. Visitors can see stunning and sometimes startling images of change over time in this extreme system, predators and their young, scientists at work, and the field stations where they live.

Retired research gear from Antarctica will be on display and visitors can even try to identify microscopic animals or see if they can get into a real survival suit in under a minute, and climb into a Zodiac boat just like the scientists do—all aimed at giving visitors an idea of what scientists have been doing in the southernmost ecosystem, how they have lived, and why their work matters.

The exhibition was developed by NOAA Fisheries Service scientists in collaboration with the San Diego Natural History Museum. **NOAA will participate in a variety of public programs that coincide with the exhibition, such as a lecture, a free (with admission) Family Day, and a special members-only opening event.**

Working on Thin Ice: 25 Years of Research in Antarctica is made possible with funding from: Preserve America Initiative, NOAA Fisheries Southwest Fisheries Science Center. *Ends of the Earth: From Polar Bears to Penguins* is made possible with generous funding from: Bank of America Charitable Foundation, City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture, Ellen Browning Scripps Foundation, Sempra Energy Foundation, and the County of San Diego Board of Supervisors, at the recommendation of Supervisor Ron Roberts and Supervisor Pam Slater-Price. *Ends of the Earth: From Polar Bears to Penguins* is a production of Science North, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. The supporting sponsor for this special exhibition is Quark Expeditions.

The **U.S. AMLR Program** was established in 1986 and resides at the NOAA Fisheries Southwest Fisheries Science Center in La Jolla, California. Its mission is to provide the scientific information needed to detect, monitor, and predict the effects of harvesting and associated activities on target, dependent, and related species and populations of the Antarctic marine living resources, and the ecosystems of which they are a part. The U.S. AMLR Program conducts at-sea and land-based research on several major components of the Antarctic ecosystem and the effects of human activities, such as fishing pressure and climate change, on the ecosystem. The study area is the South Shetland Islands, Antarctic Peninsula and Southern Scotia Arc region of the Southern Ocean. <http://swfsc.noaa.gov/aerd/>

The **San Diego Natural History Museum** is the second oldest scientific institution in California and the third oldest west of the Mississippi. Founded in 1874 by a small group of citizen scientists, the Museum's mission is to interpret the natural world through research, education and exhibits; to promote understanding of the evolution and diversity of Southern California and the peninsula of Baja California, Mexico; and to inspire in all people respect for the environment. Website: www.sdnhm.org.

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